

RECORDS OF BLISTER BEETLES OF THE GENUS *CYANEOLYTTA* (COLEOPTERA: MELOIDAE) FROM ZAMBIA¹

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ABSTRACT: *Cyaneolytta granulipennis*, *C. iridescens* and *C. signifrons* are recorded for the first time from Zambia. A second record is provided for *C. depressicornis* in Zambia.

In a recent comprehensive summary of the literature pertaining to the Afro-Indian blister beetle genus *Cyaneolytta* Péringuey, Selander (1986) provided a useful framework upon which to organize new information about these little-known beetles. While in residence at the Kabwe Regional Experiment Station of the Zambia Ministry of Agriculture and Water Development at Kabwe (formerly Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia) during November-December, 1984, I made a special effort to collect meloid beetles when encountered at Kabwe and environs. Results that pertain to *Cyaneolytta* are reported here. References to collection at light refer to incandescent light.

Cyaneolytta signifrons (Fahraeus)

A male collected on 15 November and a female on 1 December, both at Kabwe, provide the first records of this elegant species for Zambia. I took the specimens at light.

Cyaneolytta depressicornis (Castelnau)

On 20 November at Kabwe, I took a single male at light. This record is the second for Zambia; the species had been recorded previously from Luangwa.

Cyaneolytta granulipennis (Castelnau)

At Muswishi (ca. 28 km SE Kabwe) on 10 December, I observed this very large species feeding in numbers on unidentified weedy grasses that were emerging in a tilled field planted to maize (*Zea mays* L.). Although the sky was heavily overcast and rain fell intermittently during the period of observation, the beetles were quite active with much rapid running about;

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courtship and mating were noted. Six males and two females were taken at the site. I had previously taken a female at light at Kabwe on 16 November. These collections are the first definite records of *C. granulipennis* for Zambia. The species had been recorded previously from the ambiguous locality of Victoria Falls (Zambia-Zimbabwe).

Cyaneolytta iridescens (Haag-Rutenberg)

I collected four specimens at light at Kabwe: a male and a female on 16 November, a female on 17 November, and a male on 26 November. At Muswishi on 10 December, I collected a male and a female of *C. iridescens* in the company of *C. granulipennis* under the conditions recorded above for the latter species. Because I did not distinguish between these species at the time of collection, I cannot specifically state that *C. iridescens* is a grass-feeder. The above records are the first for this species in Zambia.

In conclusion, it seems worth noting here that on an earlier trip to Zambia (April 1984) during which I also was in residence at the Kabwe Regional Research Station and collected at the same or nearby localities, I encountered no blister beetles of the genus *Cyaneolytta*. This negative evidence compared with the positive evidence reported here suggests that the Zambian representatives of *Cyaneolytta* commence their adult activity with the beginning of the rainy season in November and conclude it by the onset in April of the seven-month dry season.

All insect specimens noted above are deposited in the collection of the Section of Faunistic Surveys and Insect Identification, Illinois Natural History Survey.

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